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Letter dated 14 February 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 14 February 2017, addressed to you by Mehmet Dânâ, Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (see annex).

I would be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 41, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Güven **Begeç**
Deputy Permanent Representative
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex to the letter dated 14 February 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of the letter dated 14 February 2017 addressed to you by Mustafa Akıncı, President of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (see enclosure).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its enclosure circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 41, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mehmet **Dânâ**
Representative

Enclosure

I am writing to draw your kind attention to a recent decision of the Greek Cypriot parliament to include in the dates commemorated by the schools in the South the so-called referendum held by Greek Cypriots in 1950 for union with Greece (*Enosis*). The decision, if not revoked, will deal a serious blow to the efforts to build confidence between the two sides in Cyprus and thus will considerably undermine the current negotiating process aimed at a comprehensive settlement.

As you are well aware, the Greek Cypriot goal of *Enosis* was the main reason which led to the Cyprus problem in the first place and to the suffering and pain on our island. The 1960 International Cyprus Treaties also expressly prohibited *Enosis*. I am sure that you are as astonished as I am to learn that after 67 years, this issue is now being brought up by a far-right extremist political party, ELAM, and supported by the majority in the House of Representatives in the South. It is indeed more regrettable that Mr. Anastasiades's party, DISY, contributed to this decision.

This decision has dealt a serious blow to our process at a time when the negotiations are at a very critical stage and we have decided to continue to the Cyprus Conference in March. The education of youth and the promotion of a peace culture are of paramount importance if we are to live in a united federal Cyprus. With this aim, we established a bicommunal technical committee on education as a confidence-building measure. Instead of fulfilling this responsibility, the current decision, which targets students of secondary education, will only plant seeds of division in the minds of the next generation and render all mutually agreed confidence-building measures meaningless. This is also naturally not in line with your calls and that of the Security Council for the two sides to take steps that will help build confidence on the island and prepare our respective communities for a settlement.

This decision, coupled by racially motivated attacks against Turkish Cypriots who cross to the South, has furthermore reinforced the security concerns of Turkish Cypriots and highlighted the need for a mechanism to deter such tendencies within the context of a settlement.

Aware of the risks that the year 2017 carries for the settlement efforts, I believe it is of the utmost importance that all the relevant parties refrain from taking such steps and making our already complicated task of achieving a viable and durable settlement all the more difficult. It is not a secret that the Turkish Cypriot side is waiting for the Greek Cypriot side to take steps so that a bizonal, bicommunal federation with the effective participation of the two sides can be ensured and sustained. The important decisions that we have to take during these critical weeks will play a decisive role in shaping the future of our island and that of the next generations. In this regard, I kindly urge you to use your best efforts to remind my counterpart, Mr. Anastasiades, that the above-mentioned decision of the Greek Cypriot parliament clearly contradicts the letter and the spirit of all the relevant United Nations documents on Cyprus, as well as the Joint Declaration of 11 February 2014, and to encourage him to show leadership for its repeal.

(*Signed*) Mustafa **Akıncı**
President